

**Minutes of a Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council Finance and Resource Committee held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7.30pm in Parish Room (adjacent to the Parish Room), Church Lane, Doddinghurst CM15 0NJ**

**Present:** Cllrs. Mrs D. Dicker (Chairman), G. Smith, Julia Le Page, M.Capon.

**Also Present:** Mrs C Fuller - Clerk

- 1. Apologies:** Cllr A.Smith
- 2. Declaration of Interests:** None
- 3. 🖐️Resolution:** Approved, Minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- 4. Public Representation:** None
- 5. Bank Accounts:** Members considered the Clerk's report which proposed:
  - a) Closing the Business Savings Account with Santander,
  - b) Transferring the Santander funds to Unity Trust Bank,
  - c) Transferring a working sum from Barclays Bank to Unity Trust Bank,
  - d) Conducting day-to-day business from the Unit Trust account.After discussion members asked the Clerk to research alternative proposals by consulting other banks and building societies.
- 6. Information:** Barclays dual signing. The Clerk reported that the current arrangement with Barclays Bank whereby the Clerk may authorise payments under £50 without authority from other signatories would end when the mandate was changed as Barclays no longer offer this facility. The Clerk will liaise with the signatories to ensure that the Parish Council continues to comply with the mandate and the Council's Financial Regulations going forward. During the discussion it was agreed that Roger Blake would remain on the Council payroll as Project Officer for the duration of the capital works on the Parish Office and Parish Room. A draft job description and contract of employment will be drawn up for consideration.
- 7. Information:** External Audit closure. The audit process to year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 has been completed and the audit report received with no significant issues noted. Notices have been posted on the notice board and website.
- 8. Information:** The Council reviewed the forecast outturn and budget assumptions for the remainder of 2021/22 and for 2022/23. There is currently approximately £149k carried forward in year-end funds (the increase over last year being mainly due to lower expenditure during the pandemic), which is earmarked for future maintenance of the burial ground and play area, tree works, capital works and some contingency. It was agreed that £60k would be included in the 2022/23 budget for capital works (see 9 below), £5k for a village Jubilee event in the 2022/23 budget, with an anticipated spend in the current year of £1k. £9k for Fields & Play Areas to include a new cross-trainer or similar piece of equipment if it cannot be repaired under warranty, with an anticipated spend of £10k in the current budget as there has already been an over-spend due to unexpected tree works. £4k for the Projects Officer salary has been included in the 2022/23 budget.

Anticipated outturn at end of March 2022 = £156,193.  
Anticipated outturn at end of March 2023 = £108,653 (reserves reduced to finance capital project).
- 9. 🖐️Resolved:** To approve projects for implementation in the financial year 2022/23. The capital project for improvement to the Parish Council building includes:
  - Replacement of external doors and frames
  - Parish Room redecorating and flooring
  - Corridor redecoration
  - Gents' toilet refurbishment
  - Fire detector replacement and lighting to LED

- Shower area repurposing
- Disability access
- Thermal insulation to floors, wall and ceiling
- Parish office redesign, redecorate and refurnish

Total cost is estimated at £65,600 but actual quotes are awaited and members are aware that lead times and material costs are currently high. It was agreed not to split the project into phases but to get as much done as possible. Funds up to a maximum of £70k to be taken from reserves as required. The Clerk was asked to write to the Chairman of the Village Hall to advise him of the project, specifically relating to the disability access which will result in the loss of one parking space outside the hall.

**10. 🗋️ Resolved:** The budget for 2022/23 assumes a nil increase in the Band D figure. The budget was approved in principle but cannot be approved until Brentwood Borough Council release their tax base figure. The 2022/23 precept recommendation to go to the Full Council in January is based on freezing the precept at Band D £63.40 at the current tax base of 1199 (the tax base figure may change at the end of the year so that the cash precept payment figure may go up or down accordingly).

**11. Any Other Urgent Business:** None

**The meeting was closed at 9.30 pm**

0000000

Signed: ..... Deborah Dicker (Chairman)

Dated: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022